

(341)

SELECTIONS
FROM THE
VERNACULAR NEWSPAPERS

PUBLISHED IN THE

PUNJAB, NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES, OUDH, AND
CENTRAL PROVINCES,

Received up to 8th April, 1871.

POLITICAL (DOMESTIC).

THE *Khair Khwáh-i-Panjáb*, for the 4th March, writes that it is a prevailing complaint in the Garden Reach, a place in Calcutta, that since the agents and officials of Wájid Ali Sháh, the ex-Nawab of Lucknow, have taken up their quarters there, thefts and other evils have become so numerous that many of the gentlemen who lived there have quitted their houses and settled in other parts of the city; even the price of houses and lands in that neighbourhood has considerably fallen, so much so that few persons think of buying them at all.

The same paper reports that on the 14th of February last, a poor woman at Allahabad, who supported herself by grinding corn, was enticed by an *employé* of the emigration recruiters to go with him to the Khurdabad Serai, in hopes of getting work at high wages, and on reaching there was forcibly shut up in a room where a number of women and children were collected, and was told that she would be sent to the island of Jamaica, where she would get Rs. 12 a month besides clothes. The woman refused, and prayed for release, but all in vain. She remained shut up a day and night, when her sister traced out the place of her confinement somehow or other; but on nearing the door of the room where the woman was shut up, she too was forced in. On this she set up such loud cries and complaints that the recruiters were obliged through fear to release her. These particulars were communicated to the

Revd. Mr. Evans, who, with the Revd. Mr. Williamson, came to the spot, and on being told that all the women and children in the room had been seized against their will, got them released. The recruiters have been sentenced to one year's imprisonment.

The *Allypurrh Institute Gazette* of the 31st March, in a long leader, suggests the desirability of appointing a Hindustani Private Secretary in each of the Governments under Her Majesty's Indian Empire, in addition to the present English Private Secretary. After premising what a difficult task it is to govern a kingdom, as a Governor has to deal with myriads of his fellow-creatures, and because of the multiplicity and diversity of the relations which exist between him and his subjects, and of the responsibilities which devolve on him in virtue of his office, the writer asserts that the excellence of Government consists in gaining the affections of the people, and securing their good will and confidence. But this important end can never be gained unless the ruler be fully informed of the real state of his subjects, and have a thorough acquaintance with all that concerns them, so as to be able to devise fit and appropriate measures for promoting their happiness and prosperity. This information can only be acquired by means of ministers and counsellors, on whom rulers depend for the management of all State transactions; and it is therefore necessary that these persons should be fully conversant with the actual state of the people, and be of the same nation with them, in which case they will be able to give the ruler all the information regarding the subjects, which it is of importance for him to have; while the latter will be encouraged on finding persons of their own nation at the head of affairs to represent their wants and grievances, which they cannot do with as much facility through the medium of men of a foreign nation as through those of their own.

On the above grounds, the writer impresses on the Government, North-Western Provinces, the necessity of appointing a

Native Private Secretary to act under it, and comments upon the benefits which will be gained by the adoption of such a plan. It is added that the post cannot be supposed to be too high to be conferred on Hindustánis, seeing that they have been considered worthy of a place even in the Council of the Governor-General for making Laws and Regulations. The writer thinks, however, that discretion should be exercised on the selection of Natives for the preferment.

The *Panjabí Akhbar* of the 1st April has an article on the appointment of jurors, assessors, and arbitrators, or *panches*. The writer begins with stating that, though Government has appointed Judges to deal out justice and equity to the people, it is its wish that their province should be limited to administering justice only to an extent that lies within the reach of their local experience and knowledge. Accordingly, in special cases, where for want of local experience, or through ignorance, or any special disqualification, there is a likelihood of these officers not being able to get at the truth of a case, and consequently where justice may miscarry, the law provides helps to make up for the deficiency. These are of three descriptions:—

(1) *Juries or assemblies of twelve Europeans or Eurasians* appointed to pass judgment on criminal cases relating to Her Majesty's European subjects, which are brought into a Court of Appeal, that is, a High Court or a Chief Court, for final decision.

(2) *Assessors*, who are nominated to give their opinion in serious cases committed to the Sessions. These differ from jurors in this respect, that, while it is obligatory on the Court to abide by the judgment of the latter, it is optional with it to receive or reject the opinion of the former.

(3) *Arbitrators or panches*. These are appointed by the mutual agreement of the parties to a suit, and so long as the latter have expressed in writing their willingness to abide by

the decision, and the arbitrators are not suspected of collusion, the decision is irrevocable, and cannot be reversed even by the Judge.

After the above preamble, the writer proceeds to consider how far each of the three means of assistance is of use in the administration of justice. He approves of the last, or the system of appointing *panches*, which is based on the mutual consent of the parties, and thinks that the more this system is extended the more easily will disputes be settled, while the work of the Courts will be lessened. He would wish the system to be carried to its highest perfection, and have Courts of Reconciliation established in each district, to which the litigants should resort in the first instance, before having recourse to a Court of Justice.

As to the appointment of jurors and assessors, the writer admits that if the object contemplated by such appointments could be gained, they would prove useful auxiliaries in the administration of justice. But since the case is otherwise, justice is not aided by them as it ought to be.

To begin with juries. It is a bad principle that the verdict of a jury should be deemed irrevocable. It might be alleged that the opinions of ten or twelve persons ought to outweigh the decision of a single individual—the Judge. True; but this argument holds good only if all the members of a jury be wise and able men, which is far from being the case. As matters now stand, the majority of them are ignorant and inexperienced men, being for the most part *Keranees* of railway offices, head-clerks of Government offices, clerks of banks, and the like. Can it possibly be expected that persons of this stamp will possess sense enough to weigh the delicate points of a suit, or get to the bottom of intricate cases? As it is, while the depositions of witnesses are being taken, whose evidence is of vital importance in the case, while the pleaders and barristers of both parties are disputing and bringing forward subtle points of law in support of their arguments, and deduc-

ing remote conclusions from them, and while the Judge is displaying his superior learning and jurisprudence in debating with the pleaders, the members of the jury indulge themselves in fanciful whims—some yawning, some diverting themselves by writing pencil notes, some scribbling on the table before them, and others lolling back on their chairs and counting the rafters in the roof of the Court-house. What a nice jury indeed! Can it be possible that men like these should be able to deliver sound judgments?

After the witnesses have been heard, the members are allowed leisure for an hour or two, in order that they may retire to a separate room, and, after consulting together, express their opinion on the subject under discussion. It may be imagined what their opinions will be worth when they do not understand the circumstances. However, the law must be obeyed, and they must pronounce the criminal guilty or innocent, though, were they to be asked their reasons for their decision, they would certainly have nothing to say.

In a word, persons selected to form a jury should be able and experienced men, whose judgment may safely be trusted, and who have established a character for honesty and straightforwardness. In the writer's opinion, there ought to be no objection to appoint learned and respectable natives as members of juries, as well as Europeans.

Again, in the appointment of assessors the same error is committed as in that of a jury. According to the law their opinions must be taken; but these are often overruled by the decision of the Court. The reason of this is that fit persons are not selected for assessors, the selection being made, as a rule, from the illiterate classes of natives, such as merchants, shopkeepers, and the like. In thus acting Government seems to be under the impression that these classes of the people have much experience and discernment, which is a mistake. The authorities ought to bear in mind that India is not England, where knowledge is the lot of the high as well as the low—where the

peasant, while he holds the plough in his hand, has letters from his friends in his pocket to answer; and the coachman, while he is driving the carriage, has a lot of newspapers beneath the cushion on which he sits, and is fully acquainted with what is going on in Parliament. In such a country, it would have been reasonable to make no distinction between the high and the low; unlike India, where care ought to be taken to entrust only such persons with the management of the country, or the administration of justice, as are men of acknowledged ability and parts.

The same paper, noticing the case of Mr. Kirwan, Superintendent of Canal Department, Dehra Ghazee Khán, against whom a charge was brought by Captain Sandeman, asserts that Abdúr Rahmán Khán, an overseer, was likewise accused of bribery and cheating by the same gentleman; and that as Mr. Kirwan's case was then before the Court, Abdúr Rahmán Khán had to remain in imprisonment till his case came on. The result was that he was acquitted.

The writer regrets that the man's case should not have been taken into consideration soon enough to have spared him disgrace, and believes that when the new arrangements have been made in the Courts, and Magistrates find time to look into matters, complaints of this kind will cease.

The *Koh-i-Núr* of the same date publishes in its correspondence a letter from a Ghazeeabad correspondent, stating that though the rate of corn is very low, theft and robbery are on the increase in that city. On the 19th March, a carriage containing pilgrims to Gurgawan was plundered by robbers, who forcibly took all their goods and jewels and then ran away. In another instance, a woman, who was going from the Railway station to the city, at 8 P. M. was robbed at the distance of only six or seven hundred yards from the town; and, in spite of her cries and complaints, no person came to her relief. In a third instance, a *khánsáma* lost his box containing goods.

Besides the above, many other cases of theft and robbery are stated to have happened, of which the correspondent promises to give a detail afterwards. He regrets that the management of the police should be so bad. He is informed that people have begun to bury their jewels and property underground as they used to do in former times, and thinks it a pity that, while the use of arms is disallowed by Government, the management of the police should be in such a bad state.

A Peshawur correspondent of the same paper writes that the shops for the sale of arms had recently been removed to the vicinity of the Cabul Gate, in order that the police might have an opportunity of seeing that the arms are not sold to people of foreign countries. Unfortunately, the result has been that, on the 22nd March, 55 weapons, worth Rs. 2,000, were taken away by thieves who broke through the wall.

The *Núr-ul-Absár* of the same date refers to a lengthy article on the evils produced by extravagance at marriages, published in a number of the *Khair-Khwaáh-i-Panjáb*. The writer concurs with the editor of the latter paper in condemning extravagance, but thinks that in checking it care should be taken not to encroach on the dues or perquisites of menial servants and dependents. Similarly, in fixing the limits of expenditure, no schemes of economy should be adopted that might have an injurious effect on the various trades and professions, and consequently on the wealth of the country. In dwelling on this argument, the writer advances views which favour luxury and extravagance because they foster many trades, furnish employment to thousands who would otherwise be idle, and thus prove a means of adding to the wealth of a nation.

The *Nujm-ul-Akhhár* of the same date publishes a notification on the part of a new society established at Delhi, under the name of *Unjuman-i-Imán* (religious society), for adopting measures for a reform in the customs and ceremonies of Musulmans of the Shia sect. The foremost object which the society has at heart is the re-marriage of widows. The founder,

Maulavi Ulfat Husain, a teacher of the Normal School, Delhi, is very zealous in the cause, and intends to begin the movement in his own family, and thus set an example of reform to others. His side is taken by some ten or twelve Musalman gentlemen of Delhi.

The same paper regrets to learn that the proposed construction of a railway from Etawah to Furrukhabad will not be carried out. Furrukhabad was till lately a great mart, and the introduction of the railway through it would revive its trade. The writer invites the attention of Government to this, and remarks that, unless the scheme is carried out, trade will decline, and consequently bankers and *mahdajans* will be ruined. As Government is ever studying to promote the prosperity of its subjects, it will certainly be a pity if the people of this city should suffer such a loss in this age of improvement.

The *Karnamah* of the 3rd April, under the heading *Agra*, reports that, on the 22nd March, 225 carriages and a large number of carts carrying some two thousand pilgrims left for Muttra to take part in the fair annually held at Nari Semari on account of the worship of the Devi of that place. On reaching the frontier of Barari, in the Bhurtpore territories, the pilgrims were attacked by robbers, who plundered seven carriages, stripped the women of all their ornaments, and wounded the men.

The writer draws the attention of the authorities of Muttra and Agra, and the Government of Bhurtpore, to the matter, and remarks that as travellers are often plundered by robbers at the place referred to, efficient means should be taken for putting a stop to these depredations.

In its column of local news, the *Benares Gazette* asserts that complaints of unfair dealing on the part of the bunneahs in weighing provisions are again common in the city; but, rather than incur the loss and inconvenience of litigation, pilgrims prefer to be cheated by the bunneahs rather than

bring the grievance to the notice of the authorities. It is added that the police cannot interfere in the matter. The editor promises to write more on the subject in the next issue.

The *Kavi Vachan Sudhā* of the 5th April complains that the lamps lighted in the bazars of the city of Benares are put out at 12 P. M., and remarks that if the Municipal Committee have issued this order under the belief that the streets are frequented by passengers only till 12 in the night, they would do well to see for themselves, or else inquire from the police if they are not mistaken. In the writer's opinion the lamps should remain burning from 8 or 9 P. M. to 3 or 4 A. M.

The writer also complains that the gates of the Maidāgin garden, which is expressly intended for the benefit of the public, are closed in the evening, which is the proper time for walking.

EDUCATIONAL.

The *Agra Akhbār* of the 30th March has a communicated article on the Educational Department, North-Western Provinces. The writer, while noticing the interest taken by Sir William Muir in the Department, and the progress it has made, points out that, so far as the subordinate inspecting agencies are concerned, three things are wanting to make the system complete:—

(1) An office in each district for the Deputy Inspector. When there is no office it leads to confusion, and the Deputy Inspectors are not regarded with the same respect by the people as they would be if public buildings were erected for their offices. In fact, at present, for want of such buildings people sometimes doubt if the Educational Department is a public one.

(2) The pay of the mohurrirs attached to the Deputy Inspector's offices should be increased. These men have to attend the Deputy Inspector in his tour, and serve him in many capacities. They are record-keepers, mohurrirs, duf-

trees, and chaprassies, all in one. The small salary of Rs. 8 a month given at present is but scanty remuneration.

(3) Sub-Deputy Inspectors should receive travelling allowance while on tour. As all Government servants when on tour receive travelling allowance, and Circular No. 19, dated 26th October, 1870, allows travelling allowance even to the employés of Tehseeldars when deputed on duty, there is no reason why the Sub-Deputy Inspectors should be deprived of this indulgence.

The *Kavi Vachan Sudhá* of the 5th April speaks in very high terms of Thákur Giri Prasád, Rája of Beswán, in the Allygurh district. Though only thirty years old, the Rája has a complete mastery over Sanscrit, and is well versed in Arabic and Persian. He has recently published a commentary in Sanscrit and Bháshá on a part of the Yajur Veda. He deserves the highest praise for his attempt, which is the first of its kind, and he has done a great service to the literary world. In the writer's opinion, this service should be recognized by Government by the *Star of India*.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The *Kavi Vachan Sudhá* of the 5th April sympathizes with the wretched condition to which the Franco-Prussian war has reduced the people of France, and advises the Natives of the North-Western Provinces to follow the example of their brethren in Bengal in raising a subscription for their relief.

The following Vernacular newspapers have been examined in this report, viz.:—

No.	NAME OF NEWSPAPER.	WHERE PUBLISHED.	DATE.		DATE OF RECEIPT.	
			1871.		1871.	
1	Málwá Akhbār, ...	Indour, ...	March,	22nd	April,	7th
2	Saharanpore Gazette, ...	Saharanpore, ...	"	25th	"	2nd
3	Rohilkhund Akhbār, ...	Muradabad, ...	"	25th	"	4th
4	Gwalior Gazette, ...	Gwalior, ...	"	26th	"	7th
5	Márwār Gazette, ...	Jodhpore, ...	"	27th	"	5th
6	Oudh Akhbār, ...	Lucknow, ...	"	28th	"	7th
7	Khair Khwāh-i-Panjāb, ...	Gujarānwāllā, ...	"	4th week,	"	3rd
8	Benares Akhbār, ...	Benares, ...	"	30th	"	2nd
9	Agra Akhbār, ...	Agra, ...	"	30th	"	2nd
10	Allygurh Institute Gazette, ...	Allygurh, ...	"	31st	"	2nd
11	Lawrence Gazette, ...	Meerut, ...	"	31st	"	4th
12	Rajpūtāna Social Science Congress.	Jaipore, ...	"	31st	"	7th
13	Ab-i-Hayāt-i-Hind, ...	Agra, ...	April,	1st	"	2nd
14	Panjābī Akhbār, ...	Lahore, ...	"	1st	"	3rd
15	Koh-i-Nūr, ...	Ditto, ...	"	1st	"	3rd
16	Nur-ul-Absār, ...	Allahabad, ...	"	1st	"	4th
17	Samay Vinod, ...	Nynce Tal, ...	"	1st	"	5th
18	Majma-ul-Bahrain, ...	Ludhiana, ...	"	1st	"	6th
19	Nujm-ul-Akhbār, ...	Meerut, ...	"	1st	"	7th
20	Benares Gazette, ...	Benares, ...	"	3rd	"	5th
21	Kārnāmāh, ...	Lucknow, ...	"	3rd	"	6th
22	Mailā-i-Nūr, ...	Cawnpore, ...	"	3rd	"	7th
23	Dabdabā-i-Sikundari, ...	Rampore, ...	"	3rd	"	7th
24	Kavi Vachan Sudhā, ...	Benares, ...	"	5th	"	7th
25	Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq, ...	Allygurh, ...	"	6th	"	7th
26	Benares Akhbār, ...	Benares, ...	"	6th	"	8th

ALLAHABAD :
The 10th April, 1871. }

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